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AGREEMENT SIGNED ON SNOW & ICE REMOVAL
Move will Improve Public Safety on Critical Roads

At the direction of Governor Mitt Romney, snowplowing operations on a number of key Department of Conservation of Recreation (DCR) roadways have been transferred to the Massachusetts Highway Department (MHD) under an agreement announced today.

"This is a major public safety issue and this will allow us to have a more effective and comprehensive plan to handle snow emergencies," said Romney. "DCR is an appropriate steward of our parks and other recreational resources, but MassHighway has the proven ability and expertise to keep these critical roadways clear during the winter months."

Romney ordered MassHighway equipment onto DCR roadways on an emergency basis two weeks ago when snow build-up caused massive backups on Storrow Drive, Soldier's Field Road, and other Boston-area roads. The use of this equipment was formalized through the approval of an agreement between the two agencies. "This agreement will allow DCR to focus on its core mission and to build on the good work begun to reform the agency," said Secretary of Environmental Affairs Ellen Roy Herzfelder.

The agreement turns over all plowing operations throughout the winter to the Highway Department on select parkways. DCR will be able to intensify its focus on its other roads and walkways by focusing the use of its 33 plows and existing equipment on those areas, in particular school zones, hospitals, and other public facilities. DCR will continue to be responsible for day-to-day maintenance, such as catch basin cleaning and pothole repair, on all of its parkways, and it will continue to have responsibility to clear the sidewalks along the parkways.

“MassHighway has over 5,000 contracted pieces of equipment at its call, and these resources will allow for dramatically improved snow removal on these select DCR roadways,” said Massachusetts Highway Department Commission John Cogliano. “This agreement paves the way for better government and better services for the taxpayer.”

The agreement between the two agencies goes into effect immediately. Affected roadways include major commuter arteries such as Storrow Drive, Fresh Pond Parkway, Soldiers Field Road, Fellsway, Lynn Fells Parkway Hull Shore Drive and several other smaller roads in the greater Boston area. It is anticipated that additional DCR roads will be added to this list in future agreements.

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